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TEXT-BOOKS, RECENT AND FORTHCOMING — PEDAGOGICAL PUBLICATIONS

A school edition of Björnson's *En Fallit* is being prepared by Professor J. A. Holvik. It will be ready for use before the opening of the school year in September. The publisher is Augsburg Publishing House of Minneapolis.

High school teachers of Scandinavian frequently have difficulty in finding suitable easy reading material for the first year. Until the publication of text-books containing such material teachers of Swedish might be interested in Elsa Beskow's *Sagobok* (Wahlström och Widstrand, Stockholm, 1915, pp. 144, kr. 2:50, bound). This could well be used with the help of a dictionary for rapid reading, or without such help, if necessary. The language is simple, and inclines toward being colloquial in style. The volume is illustrated.

Gødert Olsen's *Svensk Læsebog for Mellemkolen* (Lehmann og Stages Forlag, Copenhagen, 1916, pp. 283, kr. 2:85, bound) could be used in this country by students of Swedish who read Danish and Norwegian, and if one is content with the texts alone without vocabulary, etc., it could also be used in other Swedish classes. The reading material is graded according to difficulty, from the view-point of the Danish student, and is intended for students between the ages of thirteen and sixteen. The reader contains both prose and poetry by the best writers and is especially well illustrative of Swedish life and history; eleven pages are devoted to an account of John Ericsson of American fame. The lines of the text are numbered, the type is excellent, and there are numerous illustrations. Ten pages are devoted to an account of the pronunciation of Swedish, whereupon follow three pages of texts in phonetic transcription (Danish system). The commentary is detailed, covering 47 pages. In the vocabulary the pronunciation of each word is indicated in transcription; the vocabulary is at the same time an index to the notes. The volume closes with an account of Swedish grammar (eleven pages).

Memorizing is important in connection with foreign language teaching, not only the memorizing of poetry, but of prose as well. In making an assignment of something to be memorized it is no doubt very common for the teacher to ask the class to get the meaning of the poem and to memorize it as parts of the same lesson. Good foreign language teachers, however, make it a point to see to it that the class thoroughly understands the material to be memorized before it is so assigned. Also teachers of Scandinavian, even where all students already have a reading knowledge, should find it desirable to impart to the class a real understanding of the poem before assigning it to be memorized; there is then little likelihood that the students will thoughtlessly memorize merely a jumble of words. It is clearly a gain, also, if the teacher has succeeded in advance in interesting the class in the poem to be memorized in which case the memorizing will be less irksome. Also other matters connected with memorizing are pointed out by Maxwell F. Littwin in an article on *Literature Memorization in the Light of Experimental Pedagogy* in the December (1916) number of *The Pedagogical Seminary*. I call attention to the following important statements: It is more advantageous (both from the point

of view of time and energy spent and from that of retention) to learn a memory passage by rereading the whole passage each time than by dividing it into parts and learning, for example, a stanza at a time; a slightly modified process is recommended if the passage contains parts of special difficulty (see p. 513 of article). Further, it is more advantageous to spread the repetitions required for memorizing over several sittings than to learn the whole passage at one sitting; retention is then better, and there is less fatigue though the time spent in memorizing may be a little longer. Instructions to a foreign language class on how to memorize should prove very valuable. Our teachers may be interested also in reading a more detailed recent study on memorizing which has appeared in *Wellesley College Studies in Psychology*, No. 2 (Vol. XXII, No. 4 of *Psychological Review Publications*, 1916). It is entitled *Two Studies in Memorizing by Slow and by Rapid Repetition. I, Rate of Repetition and Tenacity of Impression*, by E. A. McC. Gamble. *II, The Relative Amount of Fatigue Involved in Memorizing by Slow and by Rapid Repetition*, by Josephine Nash Curtis.

In the November number of *The Modern Language Journal* there is a valuable article by Charles M. Purin on *The Direct Teaching of Modern Foreign Languages in American High Schools*. The author deals briefly but clearly with various phases of the subject. After pointing out why the Grammar-translation Method was adopted in Germany, he sketches the movement that culminated in the radical reform. Because the name "Direct Method" is often wrongly used, the author points out that this should be applied to the extreme method as used in France and in Frankfurt (etc.), while the modified method employed in Germany (except as mentioned), which allows a moderate use of the mother tongue and of translation, is called the "Reform Method." The author states as his opinion that (1) The Natural Method belongs in the grades (from the age of eight or nine on), but reading and writing should not be long deferred. (2) The Direct Method, which he says, presupposes a six-year course, belongs in the Junior High School. It can, however, also be used in a four-year course if handled with discretion. (3) In high schools with less than a four-year course the Reform Method should be used, and the amount of English employed, especially in teaching grammar, should be greater with older than with younger students. (4) For technical schools the Grammar-translation Method (in a modified form) is suggested if the course is two years. The author stresses especially the fact that for a two-year high school course the Reform Method and not the Direct Method should be used. The article concludes with a few words about the preparation of teachers and the preparation of more suitable text-books.

The same number of the publication just mentioned contains an article by Lillian L. Stroebe on *Das Studium der Geographie und Landeskunde Deutschlands*, where the author first calls attention to the recently growing demand for better prepared teachers of modern languages. The author then suggests that, even after leaving school, the teacher should continue studies along the line of teaching, and suggests setting aside a certain number of hours (three) a week for such development. As one important subject where self-instruction is valuable in the case of foreign language teachers, the study of the foreign

land is emphasized. The author outlines the subject in some detail, giving names of books for each subdivision of the subject, books the purchase of which would be within the means of any teacher. My reference to this here is to call the attention of our Scandinavian teachers to the need of an intimate knowledge of the same subject for their respective languages, and more especially for the purpose of suggesting that someone prepare a study like Lilian Stroebe's for each of the Scandinavian languages. Such studies, which would not be dry bibliographies, he it noted, would be of great value not only to teachers of Scandinavian, but to most of our non-teaching readers as well. A greatly improved knowledge of the country would of course result from foreign residence, which is of course as important for teachers of Scandinavian as it is for teachers of other modern languages. In this connection attention might also be called to the contribution *Reference Books for the Teachers of German* (in *Monatshefte für deutsche Sprache und Pädagogik*, Jan., 1917) as a possible model for similar contributions for Scandinavian.

In *College Plays in the United States* (in *The Quarterly Journal of Public Speaking*, October, 1916), Glenn N. Merry gives a list of about 300 plays produced in English in American colleges and universities during the last five years. It should interest our readers to know that six of these are Scandinavian, all by Ibsen, namely: *Doll's House*, *Enemy of Society*, *Master Builder*, *Pillars of Society*, *Vikings of Helgeland*, *Feast of Solhaug*. The author does not aim to state how many performances of each play were given at the same school during the five years, nor does he indicate whether a given play was given at only one institution or at more. In the April (1916) number of the same Journal there is an article by Alec M. Drummond on *The Choice of Plays*, where general criteria for the choice of school plays are given which may be of value to some of our readers. The author gives lists of "presentable" plays. The Scandinavian authors that he recommends for presentation in translated form are of course Ibsen, Björnson, and Strindberg. Of six of Ibsen's plays that he mentions we find the first four of those named above, but instead of the last two he gives *Rosmersholm* and *Pretenders*. Of Björnson he mentions *The Bankrupt*, *Lesson in Marriage*, *Leonarda*; of Strindberg, *The Dance of Death, Part I*. In none of his lists does he aim at completeness.

Pedagogisk tidskrift for August, October, and November contains contributions dealing with a new study plan for the Swedish gymnasium, the discussion centering largely on changes affecting modern languages. R. E. Zachrisson in *Några synpunkter rörande frågan om gymnasiets omorganisation* complains especially of injustice done to the English course, while Karl Nordlund in *Gymnasieproblemet och språkfrågan* insists that on the whole English has not suffered, and that in general the modern languages have probably gained more than they have lost; that whereas in several cases a foreign language is in the new plan discontinued a year or two before graduation, this is compensated by an earlier start. Our readers will understand that in a country where there are three modern foreign languages to be studied instead of two, it must be difficult to find enough time in the curriculum to do justice to all. The November number contains an article by O. P. Behm on *Om nyttan av ordlistor samt om bokpriser*, occasioned by a resolution adopted by a con-

ference of language teachers complaining of the increasing practise of publishers and editors to burden their text-editions with too extensive notes and with superfluous vocabularies, especially in advanced texts. The author rightly holds that the equipment of text-editions with vocabularies saves the student much sorely needed time, and that being without them is to pay too big a price for the acquisition of the art of using a dictionary, which, he points out, is after all not a very difficult accomplishment. He especially commends vocabularies that indicate the pronunciation in phonetic transcription. Though it seems to be a fairly common practise in Sweden to publish vocabularies that omit the commonest words, the writer correctly points out that there are few words that all students could be relied upon to know.

When we hear translation exercises in foreign language study defended a reason frequently given is that translation into English helps in the student's English training. This was again emphasized in one of the most recent defenses of translation, that in a paper on "Translation in the Classroom," read by Bayard Quincy Morgan at the meeting last December of the Central Division of the Modern Language Association of America. Those not in favor of translation reply to this phase of the argument much as Professor James Taft Hatfield in part did in opening the discussion on this paper,—that the student's English is no concern of the foreign language teacher,—that he is teaching the foreign language. A comment from a somewhat different angle is given in R. W. Brown's *How the French Boy Learns to Write, A Study in the Teaching of the Mother Tongue* (Harvard University Press, Cambridge 1915). After calling attention to the change in French foreign language teaching in 1902, when the Direct Method was adopted, Professor Brown, in speaking of the relation between the students' foreign language work and the work in the native language, gives it as his opinion, after careful consideration and investigation, that, although the complaint is often heard that the French boy does not write as well as formerly, this is not due to the doing away with translation from foreign languages into French. The author found some teachers laying the blame here and saying that to make the boy think, speak, and live in the foreign language for an hour or two every day is harmful to his French. Others insisted that the decline in ability was only apparent,—that formerly only the chosen few had been educated, now education had been popularized. In this chapter on the work in foreign languages, the author also describes a recitation in English in French schools, and expresses the opinion that the Direct Method has proven successful. In advanced classes in English he found the French instructor teaching English literature according to the methods prevailing in teaching similar works in the mother tongue. Professor Brown's book, to the whole of which I can not here devote attention, has been reviewed from the French view-point in the July (1916) number of *Revue Pédagogique*.

In an article entitled *Grimm's Law and its Relation to the Study of Foreign Languages in High Schools* in the September (1916) number of *Education*, W. A. Sutherland expresses the opinion that the use of Grimm's Law in teaching vocabulary would greatly simplify this admittedly difficult part of language work, and even ventures the opinion that "by making use of it, it may be that the coming generation of students will be able to learn almost two lan-

guages in the same time required by their fathers to learn one." For the Germanic languages Grimm's Law could of course only be used through the medium of Latin and its descendants; for the Germanic languages the author, however, apparently has in mind also other language laws. The author deplores the utter neglect of these helps on the part of writers of language textbooks. This statement is not entirely accurate, nor is the author's opinion of the future possibilities of language instruction along this line justified. No doubt not a little good can come from the use of such devices, but I dare say there are instances of excessive employment of them as well as of too little. The author says: "The consonants to which Grimm's Law applies are practically always the same in Latin and Greek, etc., as in the original language. The variations are negligible." This statement seriously underestimates the differences between Indo-European and Latin.

In *Reorganization of the High School Curriculum* in the February (1917) number of *Educational Review*, James Reed Young says among other things, that we tend in this country to try to teach too many languages in the high school curriculum with too little time devoted to each. He suggests that it would be better for our smaller high schools to offer three years of two modern languages than two years of three languages. Also he urges against the student's dabbling in too many languages without getting any one well. It occurs to me that it would be interesting to know which other languages (and how much of each) our students of Scandinavian have studied distinguishing between those who have had one, two, and three (or more) years of Scandinavian, respectively. Also, to what extent do students of Scandinavian origin study another Scandinavian language than their own, and to what extent one in addition to their own. What do students of Scandinavian normally do, when one parent is Norwegian (or Danish) and the other Swedish? Finally, what other modern foreign languages are taught in the schools where Scandinavian is taught?

In *The School World* for December, 1916, E. Creagh Kittson, in an article entitled *The Difficulty of Oral Work*, emphasizes strongly the need of most careful work in the teaching of pronunciation (including intonation). He believes in the use of the phonetic alphabet, and stresses the importance of much talking of the foreign language by the student. He points out that one must not forget that learning to pronounce is very hard and that it requires a strong volitional effort on the part of the student. The same is true of learning to talk. I cannot agree with the author that "learning a living language without learning to talk it is only a pretence." In the October (1916) number of the same publication, Mr. Kittson, in *Grammar and the Oral Method of Teaching Living Languages*, shows why the older method's approach of language teaching from the point of view of grammar was wrong.

In the November (1916) number of *Monatshefte für deutsche Sprache und Pädagogik* there is an article by Max Griebisch entitled *Warum die direkte Methode?* He points out that, generally speaking, the revolution in modern language teaching is paralleled by changes in instructional methods in other subjects; in the case of the modern languages the resultant of the change has

been given a specific name. The author shows that the Direct Method merely follows presentday pedagogical principles and that explains "Why the Direct Method." It is merely a question of adapting the instruction to the natural ability of the student, allowing for variations due, e. g., to varying age. For the mature student there is need of more reason and there is less possibility for imitation; therefore grammar should be presented differently to these, and more use should be made of phonetics. In the same number there is also a good article by Frida von Unwerth on the question of to what extent English should be used in modern language teaching. The author believes that English may be used chiefly (a) in teaching grammar, for clearness, (b) in explaining new words and related matters, (c) for difficult passages.

If the teaching of Scandinavian is not at the present time as efficient as it should be, the beginnings of a good foundation for improvement would be made if someone would undertake to make a thorough study of how Scandinavian is now taught and with what results. High schools and colleges should of course be studied separately. The thought of the desirability of such a study occurs to me from reading in the December (1916) number journal last mentioned a study by E. E. Cochran on *Methods of Teaching German in Oklahoma*. The writer had sent a questionnaire to all the colleges and to the leading high schools in Oklahoma. Such a study for Scandinavian as I have suggested could very well include, at least for the time being, only Minnesota, but, in order that not only methods, but also results might be studied, I should urge study in person in the classes as well as by means of a questionnaire. However, it would not be necessary to consider results with the methods, at least in the beginning. Further, a fair beginning would be made if we could have a careful exposition of how the Scandinavian languages are taught in Minneapolis and St. Paul in which case attention could probably also be paid to results. Preferably, Swedish and Norwegian should be examined by teachers of the respective subjects.

The Elementary School Journal for September, 1916, contains *A Study of the Common Mistakes in Pupils' Oral English*, by Isabel Sears and Amelia Diebel; the article is based on the results of five days' observation of the spoken language of 1387 pupils from the third through the eighth grades by the regular teachers of these pupils. Tempting though it would be to dwell at some length on the results of the investigation and on the authors' interpretation of these results, I shall merely, after stating that the authors found great improvement in pronunciation in the upper grades but little or no improvement along other lines, make two remarks about Scandinavian that occurred to me while reading the article. Of errors noted there is a considerable variety, and we find, as we might have expected, such well-known torturers as "It is me," "Who did you see?" "if he was in my place." As we know, the rule in our schools is "Talk as you are told to write." In the event that some of our Scandinavian teachers, through influence from the English practise, may tend toward employing the same principle for Scandinavian, I want here to call attention to the imperative need of distinguishing in Scandinavian between the spoken and the written language. In Swedish, for example, a plural subject must always be followed by the verb in the singular in the spoken form of the language, the

negatives *icke* and *ej* and the relative *vilken* must not be used, etc. The use of specifically literary forms invariably attracts the attention of Swedes in Sweden, however cultured these are, and the one using them soon enough has a feeling as though he were speaking a foreign language. For the present I shall say only what I have now said concerning colloquial language (in Swedish); in my *Swedish Grammar* is found a rather detailed account of the differences between spoken and written Swedish. In a later number of this journal I hope to say a few words about the proper interrelation between spoken and written Swedish in our instruction. Another matter: I find that a few of the mistakes in grammar noted are clearly cases of foreign idiom on the student's part (mostly German, as it happens). I miss a statement to this effect in the article. The question occurs to me: What would be the effect on the presence of such foreign idioms in the students' English if these pupils were also studying their respective mother-tongues? Perhaps they were (the author does not say). That is, does not early school instruction in the native language of persons of foreign descent help to eradicate such errors? This would at least give the pupil some basis for judging.

A good exposition of up-to-date modern language teaching is given in E. Prokosch's *The Teaching of German in Secondary Schools* (Bulletin of the University of Texas, Austin, Texas, 1915, No. 41, pp. 55). While the booklet is based on conditions existing in Texas, and while it deals with German, all modern language teachers should be intimately acquainted with this practical exposition. The following subjects are considered: Methods in General, General Principles of the Direct Method, Pronunciation, Speaking, Reading, Grammar, Written Work, The Course of Study, The Teacher, Lesson Sketches, Bibliography (this very briefly). Due attention is paid to the use of phonetics, the employment of phonetic transcription, the place of English in the classroom, translation, inductive teaching of grammar, use of the blackboard, dictation, examinations, assignments, selection of books, outside reading, and sight reading.

The Foreign Language Teachers' Bulletin (Vol. II, No. 1; in Bulletin of the University of Texas, Austin, Texas, 1915, No. 19, pp. 28) contains several matters of interest. In *Organization of the Modern Language Course in the High School*, Thomas B. Fletcher suggests that, while it is well for the pupil to begin modern language work as early as possible, there is another consideration of importance, namely that the last year of language study should coincide with the last year of high school attendance, so as to make possible unbroken continuity with college work for those that go to college, and so as to leave the subject fresh in the minds of the others for practical application to their lines of work. The suggestion is accordingly that in high schools where only a two or three year language course is possible, the language be begun in the third or second year of the high school course, respectively. All college teachers of language are well aware of the harm done by the lapse of a year between high school and college language study; it may well be open to question, however, whether the interests of the few who go to college would outweigh that of the many who might begin their language study at an earlier age. For as to the practical application for those who do not go on to college,—we could only

wish that there were enough likelihood of this to make it a feasible argument. In the case of Scandinavian, of course, where at present so many of the students of the language studied already have a feeling for it, a very early beginning is not so indispensable; but on the other hand the need for uninterrupted continuity in college is not so great; and, finally, there is much more likelihood of practical use of the languages, but this does not in the same degree demand that the language study be fresh in the students' minds, although this would be preferable. The Bulletin also contains *An Experiment with Phonetic Script in Elementary German Instruction*, apparently by the managing editor of the Bulletin, Professor E. Prokosch.

Useful ideas could also be gained by our language teachers from reading Carl Schlenker's *Bulletin for Teachers of German* (Bulletin of the University of Minnesota, Current Problems, No. 8, 1916, pp. 41, 25 cents). While the author deals, in general, with the same subject that Prokosch treats in his *The Teaching of German in Secondary Schools*, he does so much more briefly and without any attempt at making a practical exposition of the use of methods and devices; in short, it is more theoretical. Prokosch's pamphlet sets the reader down in the class room and shows how the work is done. Schlenker's Bulletin contains a number of bibliographies which should be fruitfully suggestive to teachers of other languages than German.

Carl A. Krause's *The Direct Method in Modern Languages* (Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1916, pp. 139) contains various contributions previously published in American educational journals. The topics are: The Teaching of Modern Languages in German Secondary Schools; What Prominence is to be Assigned to the Work in Speaking the Foreign Language?; Discussion on "Present Conditions and the Direct Method"; Some Remarks on the Regents' Examinations in German; The Teaching of Grammar by the Direct Method; The Trend of Modern Language Instruction in the United States; Suggestions for Teaching Walter Krause's *Beginners' German*; Why the Direct Method for a Modern Language? Finally, there are two bibliographical lists, with brief comment on most of the works mentioned: Articles by American Writers on Modern Language Methodology for the Years 1912 and 1913; Literature of Modern Language Methodology in America for 1914. While the reader who, judging by the title of the book, expects to find a balanced account of the Direct Method, is disappointed, it is of course an advantage to have these studies in one volume.

A. LOUIS ELMQUIST.

NEWS NOTES

Of the schools that at the beginning of the academic year in September introduced Norse for the first time in the high school curriculum, the following have been called to our attention: Lanesboro and Glenwood, in Minnesota; Fessenden and Lake Preston, in South Dakota; Rugby, Jamestown, Sharon, and Overli, in North Dakota. News concerning gains in Swedish has not been received, but may be available for the next issue.